

Conflict Style Profile

This brief tool is intended to provide insight about one's own preferred methods for handling disputes, as well as the approach that others may take in the same situation. The profile rates your responses in eight categories. The three highest scoring categories reflect your preferred, or dominant, modes for dealing with conflict.

How often do I feel or act this way?

- 1 = rarely
- 2 = sometimes
- 3 = often
- 4 = most the time

	1. I find it easier to withdraw from situations that involve conflict.
	2. I predict conflicts before they ever happen, and plan scenarios to deal with them.
	3. In conflict situations, I want to make myself right and the other person wrong.
	4. I feel that a relationship is more important than winning an argument.
	5. It is important for me to remain calm during conflicts or confrontation.
	6. I show my emotions easily in conflict situations.
	7. The best way to handle conflict is by having each party give up something.
	8. I think that confronting conflict can be positive and productive.
	9. I find reasons to put off dealing with conflicts.
	10. I always go over possible moves and strategies when I anticipate a conflict.
	11. When there's an argument or disagreement, I want to win.
	12. I would prefer to make peace, rather than engaging in a heated argument.
	13. I believe that people should be rational and cool in a conflict situation.
	14. I am very intense when there is discord or disagreement.
	15. "You do for me, I do for you," is the best strategy for handling conflict.
	16. I try to see conflict with others as a chance for growth and greater understanding.
	17. If there are clashes at work, I stay away and try not to get involved.
	18. I think about past, present, and future conflicts a great deal, so I can be prepared.
	19. I try to overpower and intimidate the person with whom I am quarreling.
	20. I think harmonious relationships matter more than being right or wrong in conflict.
	21. I am fearful of expressing too much emotion during a quarrel.
	22. When I'm in conflict situations, I have to share my feelings so I'm understood.
	23. If I can't win in a conflict, I need to compromise.
	24. I'm able to meet my needs in conflict situations, and satisfy others' needs as well.
	25. I reached agreements as quickly as possible, so I don't really have to confront people.
	26. I seek out situations with the potential for conflict and confrontation to protect myself.
	27. It's more important for me to win an argument than to be accepted or liked.
	28. In confronting situations, I give in to get it over with.
	29. Keeping control of my feelings is my highest communication priority during a conflict.
	30. Getting very emotional is a strategy I often use during conflicts.
	31. I don't believe in win-win solutions, it's mostly a draw.
	32. I find conflicts give me a chance to learn more about the other person.

Score Sheet

Cautious 1. _____ 9. _____ 17. _____ 25. _____ Total: _____	Seeking 2. _____ 10. _____ 18. _____ 26. _____ Total: _____	Strong 3. _____ 11. _____ 19. _____ 27. _____ Total: _____
Peaceful 4. _____ 12. _____ 20. _____ 28. _____ Total: _____	Calm 5. _____ 13. _____ 21. _____ 29. _____ Total: _____	Feeling 6. _____ 14. _____ 22. _____ 30. _____ Total: _____
Compromising 7. _____ 15. _____ 23. _____ 31. _____ Total: _____	Solution-focused 8. _____ 16. _____ 24. _____ 32. _____ Total: _____	

Cautious

These people view conflict very negatively, feeling that in any conflict they have something to lose. They fear being vulnerable or helpless in a conflict situation, and by avoiding conflict altogether maintain their security. This avoidance will sometimes take the form of denial such as “we don't have conflicts in the company. We're a happy family.” Avoiding conflict can also be used as a shield against admitting failure when dealing with difficult situations.

Advantage-if an issue becomes too heated, time may help those involved to cool off and consider the situation more calmly.

Disadvantage-avoidance can lead to escalation, creating more tension.

Seeking

People using this style are conflict collectors. They see conflict or the potential for it in every interaction. Based on this assumption of impending conflict, they feel they must prepare themselves ahead of time to deal with any upcoming difficult encounters. They often create imaginary scripts to help them respond to challenges, both real and imagined.

Advantage-anticipating roadblocks and planning in advance can be an effective strategy.

Disadvantage-reacting to conflict where none exist can exacerbate situations, and lead to new problems.

Strong

People who prefer this style are highly motivated to get what they want; as their ego is tied up in needing to win any confrontation they are involved in. They are not concerned about the quality of interpersonal relationships, and will commonly suggest or state out right to others that their opinion, request, or behavior is unreasonable, selfish or wrong. Tending to be inflexible in their approach, they often try to overpower others by unleashing a variety of hardball tactics.

Advantage-in an emergency, quick decisions may be needed without time for collaboration.

Disadvantage-strong-arm methods can lead to polarization and demoralization.

Peaceful

People with this style favor harmony overweening. They will usually concede to others in a conflict in order to maintain a pleasant relationship because they fear the results of a direct confrontation, they tend not to express their own needs, and have well-developed strategy for smoothing things over.

Advantage-in some situations, preserving a relationship or meeting the needs of others may be more important than winning.

Disadvantage-gives an impression of weakness and susceptibility to exploitation.

Calm

This style values the ability to remain cool and collected during the conflict, believing this allows them to be more rational. Although their calm exterior sometimes masks turmoil within, these people rarely express their feelings during the conflict, and resent those who do.

Advantage-keeps the emotional atmosphere stable, allows for more rational discussion.

Disadvantage-may give the impression that they are uncaring or aloof.

Feeling

These people use a style diametrically opposed to the calm style. They consider expressing themselves and their emotions as critical to settling disputes, and tend to use broad gestures and dramatic postures. They believe that is perfectly acceptable for people to be emotional and rational at the same time.

Advantage-dramatic style can help in persuading others of an issue's importance.

Disadvantage-alienates people who are uncomfortable with strong expressions of emotion.

Compromising

Individuals using this style strive to be peacemakers, aiming to settle disputes by finding ways for both parties to compromise. Because of this focus, they may not be aware of different options to settle conflicts, or see opportunities to be creative and problem-solving.

Advantage-when both sides reach an impasse, a compromise may be the best solution.

Disadvantage-making concessions to quickly rules out a truly integrated solution, in which both parties are equally satisfied with the outcome.

Solution-focused

Those tending toward this style see conflict as an opportunity to fulfill mutual interests. They want to create an atmosphere where different perspectives are heard and understood, and look for ways to build agreement and strengthen relationships.

Advantage - this is the most constructive style of conflict, and assists in building and maintaining relationships.

Disadvantage - depending on the circumstances, it may be too time-consuming to explore the needs and interests of all the involved parties.